/61 cont./

731 was due not to human nature but to environment. A policy
648 geared to the solution of the basic problem should try to improve the livelihood of the Miao and to remove the pressure of population through migration. Otherwise, Miao disturbances cannot be eliminated and will remain a source of trouble.

241 Restricted by the size of their land area the Miao seek to
433 utilize every inch of land. Comparatively level land is made into fields to be inundated. The slopes from the foot to the waist of the mountain are terraced. The higher slopes are made into yü fields. On mountain land unsuitable for grains are
[245 planted tung trees (Illus. 32), tea plants (Illus. 33), and pine
258 trees (Illus. 34). Oil can be extracted from tung and tea seeds,
313] and the pine tree yields lumber (Illus. 35), thus providing relatively good profits forming the major part of their income from auxiliary products. Hence, the Miao are experienced in planting the tung tree and tea plants.

245 The planting of the tung trees requires first the selection of a site where not only is the earth suited for the tung tree but where the location is convenient for picking and transportation. If the slope is precipitous, transportation is difficult, and moreover the seeds may roll down into the ravine while being picked. After a place has been picked, the "slash and burn" method of cultivation is used, first all the trees and undergrowth being cut down. After some ten days to a month of sunshine and wind blasts, the felled trees and grass gradually become dried up. Then they set fire to it, and the earth becomes scorched. The soil is dug after it has been well-soaked by rain. Digging generally is done in the spring, in the second and third month, and in the winter in the tenth and eleventh months. The earth has to be dug deep to loosen the soil so that the tung trees can grow tall and big and produce solid seeds, and live a long time. The selection of the tree is guided by the size of the tree and the abundance of the seeds, those of ball shape being preferred. The planting season is from the tenth month to the second month of the next year. Either seedlings are nursed for one

/61 cont./

245 year and then transplanted, or the seeds are planted directly. The trees are planted from seven to eight ch'ih apart; if they are too close it is injurious to their growth. Although both spring and winter are suitable for planting the tung tree, winter is preferred. The newly reclaimed mountain land
243 still can be also planted with mixed cereals before the tung
245 trees have grown to any great height, for the tung tree planted the previous winter already has sprouts aboveground in the spring, and at weeding time injury to the tung reeds in the ground can be avoided. After two or three years the tung grove cannot be used to grow any more mixed cereals, and has to be weeded constantly in order to facilitate their growth. Otherwise they are liable to die. After four years the trees
245 gradually begin to produce seeds, increasing year by year; and after six or seven years all of them are producing. They blossom in the third month of the year, and harvesting is done in the eighth or ninth month, after the "Cold Dew /a solar
[805] term from October 8-22/." At harvest time the Miao go in
[182] groups up the mountain to pick the tung seeds. Men balance bamboo baskets on their shoulders, and the women carry them on their backs. /Illustrations 32-35 on pp. 62-65/ /66/ If the tree is high they hit the branches with long bamboo poles to make the seeds fall down and then pick them up. If the
[412] tree is short, they use iron hooks to get them. When the baskets are full they put them into baskets and carry them home. They put the seeds under the eaves or any damp place
[258] to enable them to absorb moisture. After a month or two the
[439] outside of the seeds become black, and then they flay the seeds, which are sold for the extraction of oil. The hulls are
[252] burned into ashes, which can be used in place of soda.

The planting of the tea plant is comparatively easier than that of the tung tree, except that while the tea plant is still a seedling it is necessary to stick pine branches on the sides to shade it from the sun. Otherwise the seedlings are liable to be killed by the sun. Or one can delay the weeding of the field for six or seven months so that the various weeds can

[text continues on p.95]

/66 cont./

245 prevent the seedlings from withering. According to the Miao the tea plant is very sturdy and can resist the cold. It blooms in the ninth and tenth months, the flowers being white in color, and fading in the eleventh month. After the second and third months, "blisters /p'ao/" form, which can be picked and eaten. They taste sweet and sour, and are often sold by the Miao women at the market place. During the seventh and eighth months the fruits ripen, and after being picked they are dried in the sun for three or four days. They split open themselves, disgorging two or four seeds. The seeds also must be dried in the sun in order tomake them dry and crisp, so that they will not get wormy and to insure a lot of oil when expressed.

258 Tung and tea seeds both yield oil. The Miao sell these seeds to the Chinese oil stores, few Miao people expressing the oil themselves. The few who do express tea oil still use a local method. The sun-dried tea seeds are pounded into bits in a mortar. Then they are dry-fried in a pan. Then water is added and brought to a boil. As bubbles of oil float on the surface of the boiling water, they are scooped out with an iron ladle and placed in a bowl. The bubbles of oil are heated again to make the water evaporate, and the residue is tea oil. The residual paste of the tung or tea seeds after the oil has been expressed is called tung paste or tea paste respectively. The tung paste can be used as fertilizer. The tea paste can be used as soap for laundry and also can be ground into powder to be thrown into the river to cause fish to suffocate so that they can be caught easily.

314 Wild indigo plants grow abundantly everywhere in the Miao area. Although the Miao know how to cultivate indigo plants, they also gather wild indigo for dyeing. Wild indigo plants are one to two kung ch'ih in height. A big one has a stalk as thick as a man's thumb, a lone plant without any side branches, reaching toward the sky. The leaves are small and oval in shape, and contain a great deal of indigo. Every year in the eighth and ninth months when the weather is still warm and before the frost comes, the indigo leaves are at their most luxuriant. The Miao go out in numbers to pick wild indigo leaves.